1858 The Daily Colonist. 1959

"An Independent Newspaper, The Organ of No Clique or Party"

SETH HALTON, Publisher SANDHAM GRAVES, Editor-in-Chief

Published every morning except Monday by the Colonist Publishers Ltd. at 2631 Douglas Street, Victoria, B.C.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 1959

In Name and Fact

ASSURANCE received by Mayor Scurrah from the Department of Transport that Patricia Bay airport will be renamed "Victoria International Airport" soon will be a step in the right direction if it is backed up by action at Ottawa to make the airfield fit for international status. Patricia Bay airport has been a customs base since the inception of civilian flying here, as fully international in that sense as any marine port of entry on this coast. It is not yet international in its flight services and standards, and indeed it was the pledge of the new administration to make it so that spurred the drive to have the airfield renamed.

If the Department of Transport is conceding the new name as a matter of courtesy, without any intention of lengthening the flight runways at the airfield it would be giving Patricia Bay a handle without any material change of its status in the flight services of this country. The development of Patricia Bay as an international airport in fact depends on the remodelling and lengthening of its main runways, the removal of the present boundary road which skirts it to the east, construction of the also-promised new terminal building, and the installation of up-to-date flying aids for the handling of air traffic under all-weather conditions.

It would be a travesty to rename Patricia Bay and leave it in its present indefinite status, with its existing runways and perhaps a new passenger building. International airports have precise standards based on international air agreement. To put Victoria on that list without these standards being attained would be worse than useless. What will be expected from the assurance given to this city is that the rest of the job will be done, and that Victoria's International Airport when it is rechristened will in fact be one. A year has passed since the initial undertaking was given and time is growing short so far as action is concerned.

A Poor Show

IT was disclosed not long ago that some 1,200,000 last war medals were still lying in Ottawa, apparently not wanted by the ex-servicemen who should have them. An extract from proceedings of the Commons offers an illuminating indication of the attitude of mind of officials responsible for their distribution.

Replying to an MP's question during a veterans' affairs committee meeting, the DVA deputy minister is quoted thus: "Most of the veterans who have a fair number of medals have applied and they have received their medals. But we still have 398,000 CVSM medals left and 527,000 war medals, 1939. As you well know, those are the two medals that are issued to practically everybody, and the people who are entitled only to those two, or to one of them, have not applied for them. We do not think that they ever will and we do not want to spend an extraordinary amount of money to try and contact these people."

The deputy minister was not very complimentary. It is disparaging to refer to a medal as being available "to practically everybody," phraseology which decries its worth and does small credit to many men who served honorably and well, even if not on the battlefield. Obviously, also, the department is more anxious to save money and effort rather than ensure that men who earned their medals should receive them.

He said further that "the interesting thing, as most of you know, is that veterans are supposed to apply for their medals, telling us where they served, so that we can determine what medal they are entitled to." Veterans will indeed find this interesting; it will cause them to wonder about the voluminous record keeping and personal files that followed them all through the war. If the department had been really anxious to distribute the medals properly it should have been no great difficulty to find out who served and where.

All it involved was time, effort and some legitimate expense, but apparently this was too much for officials unable to match in an Ottawa office something of the wartime devotion of the servicemen later asked to go cap in hand for their medals. The distribution of last war medals has been a poor show all round, and that is to the discredit of those responsible.

Not the Fountain's Fault

ACCORDING to figures given to the city council there were 31 accidents at the Fountain circle last year. In the same period there were 30 accidents at the nearby intersections of Bay and Douglas Streets and Bay and Government. These comparisons are interesting as an illustration of the effectiveness or otherwise of traffic control systems.

At the Fountain, except at rush hours, the flow of traffic is controlled by the drivers themselves. Signal lights automatically and fully regulate movement at the two Bay Street intersections, both of which are simple, right-angle crossings with no unusual features to make them dangerous. At those two intersections there were approximately as many accidents last year as at the Fountain, despite the fact that they are automatically controlled and the circle is not, and the further fact that the Fountain with its six tributaries has to accommodate during the day a good deal more traffic than the two Bay Street intersections put together.

If in 30 instances last year the existence of traffic lights failed to prevent collisions at those two points on Bay Street, is there any reason to suppose that a complex system of lights and one-way streets would appreciably improve the accident record at the Fountain? Increasing traffic density ultimately may require some reorganization of the flow pattern there, but that time does not appear to have arrived yet. The City has $30,000 put aside for reconstruction of the circle, and is wise to keep the money in reserve for the time being.

There is nothing wrong with the circus movement system that could not be cured by the adoption of better and more courteous driving habits. The type of driver who causes an accident at the Fountain, usually by trying to force a passage without right of way, is the type liable to get into trouble anywhere, lights or no lights.

Interpreting the News

Mayor of West Berlin

By ALAN HARVEY
Canadian Press Staff Writer

WILLY Brandt's forthcoming visit to Canada affords a close view of a man who may be prime minister of free Germany one day. It is a longshot, but it could happen.

Brandt, once a street fighter against Hitler, now is mayor of West Berlin, a nerve-testing job. He has what commentators call "political appeal" and may emerge as a candidate to succeed Erich Ollenhauer as leader of the Social Democratic party.

* * *

The other candidate is expected to be Ollenhauer's deputy, Fritz Erler, an intellectual who speaks English and French as fluently as his native tongue.

Present betting is that either Brandt or Erler will be at the helm in time to oppose Dr. Konrad Adenauer's governing Christian Democrats in the 1961 elections.

The speculation is of interest to Canadians since Brandt will be in Ottawa on Feb. 6 as part of a world tour. Erler was in the capital earlier this month in a fact-finding mission. Both men are 45.

* * *

Brandt has a reputation as a fighter. Born at Luebeck, the internationally-minded Baltic port notable for its fine old town hall and delectable marzipan, he escaped to Norway as a young man after engaging in street brawls against Hitler forces in 1933.

He stayed in Norway, forsook his German nationality, fought with the Norwegian underground against the German occupying troops during the Second World War, was captured by his former countrymen but gained his freedom before they realized his identity.

After the war he served as Norwegian press attache in Germany, took back his German citizenship and joined the Social Democrats.

"Why don't you end the cold war?"

Thinking Aloud

". . . of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—of cabbages and kings."

By TOM TAYLOR

I WAS reading about an up-and-coming author who when questioned on TV about what the characters in his books said, demurred. Small blame to him, I suppose, for television interviews can be fashioned like the Spanish inquisition.

Even with a diffident interviewer the victim can be badly discomfited unless the questions and answers have been rehearsed beforehand. And of course that procedure takes the spice out of things for the watchers.

This particular author didn't want the sentiments voiced by his creations held against him. They came from his own pen, he thought them up, but they didn't necessarily represent his viewpoint.

Offhand that seems paradoxical. It suggests he doesn't know his own mind, although who, actually, does. The most consistent thing about all of us is our inconsistency.

* * *

The paradox has to be true for a novelist, however. He can't invent dialogue unless he can contrive contrary argument, not if he wants his book published anyway.

A lawyer is perhaps the best example of enforced contrariness. It is his business to present his case to the best advantage and a good lawyer can argue well both sides of any question. No one ever asks him afterwards if his expressed views are what he really thinks, or challenges him when a week later he takes a reverse stand.

That is the license needful to his profession.

The author, then, can claim equal tolerance. He shouldn't be stuck in front of a television camera and asked, especially if he be an angry young man, if he honestly believes civilization is going to the dogs. Not even if the hero of his last book shouted this from the housetops.

It is all part of the literary game, you see.

Let us take even a who-dun-it author whose chief character obviously becomes his hero in a series of yarns and who might be, like the Saint for instance, a captivating chap who is actually a bit of a rascal, or at least breaks a thousand laws.

* * *

His creator, now, is scarcely likely to admit under TV questioning that the Saint's philosophy is his own. If he did he might find himself "tailed," as it were, and it not so easy to get rid of the incubus as it is in his books.

But there is another angle to all this. Social injustices have been removed, laws changed and the course of mankind altered by the power of novelists. Dickens is one instance of the maxim that the pen can be mightier than a pair of handcuffs.

There are a dozen others, writers whose sentiments voiced through the characters they create bring about beneficial reforms.

Their bookish views were obviously their own.

If writers write long enough their real substance will come out whether they are aware of it or not; and not even a demurrer in front of a camera will avail. But that takes time.

In the interim the nub is how far an author is responsible for his characters; for if these didn't provide enough contrary situatons he wouldn't be invited to a television quiz.

While he is on the way up, I suppose, he can be excused evasion.

Gerald Waring

Reports from Ottawa

BETWEEN them, Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Justice Minister Fulton appointed 37 lawyers to the judiciary in their first 18 months in office—that is, up to the end of 1958.

In a speech in the Commons on May 29, 1952, Fulton said that "I am confident that when the Conservative party is elected to power it will appoint lawyers to the bench only on the basis of their legal qualifications and fitness for the position in question. Whatever be the political party in whose ranks such men are to be found, the principle to be followed must be to appoint the man most qualified."

A study of the list has satisfied me that, with two or three possible exceptions, there can be no valid objection to the appointments on the ground that the new judges are not well qualified by knowledge of the law and by high personal and professional standards.

However, many are recognizable as former Conservative politicians or Tory partisans. The others—a lesser number—have no obvious political label. But none of the 37 can be identified as a former Liberal, Socialist or Social Crediter.

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The fact that all the new judges are either Tories or political neutrals is pretty convincing evidence that Fulton and Diefenbaker are continuing — although perhaps not so flagrantly—the practice of political preference in judicial appointments that they decried in the days of the Liberal regime. However, there is little evidence that the bench is likely to suffer by this. For example, Fulton told me—and I have no reason to doubt this—that he has withstood all pressure to appoint poorly qualified Conservative lawyers.

I have heard criticism of only three of the appointments. One new judge is known as a heavy drinker. Another was and may still be an alcoholic. At the same time he was probably the most brilliant criminal lawyer in his province. When I questioned Fulton on these appointments, he replied simply that he had satisfied himself that these men were suitably qualified for service on the bench.

The inference is that both men have curbed their drinking habits. In the case of the second man, there is no question that, aside from the fact that he is or was an alcoholic, he is eminently qualified. In appointing him, Fulton took a calculated risk. If the gamble pays off, the bench will have acquired an outstanding jurist. If it doesn't, Fulton will be liable to criticism that he should have appointed a less brilliant but more emotionally stable man. Several such were available, although most of them are Liberals.

The third appointee is a nominee of Diefenbaker. The question is simply one of competence. It is said that this man does not have enough knowledge of or experience in court practice and procedure to warrant his appointment.

* * *

In his 1952 speech Fulton urged the Liberal government to make judicial appointments in accordance with a Canadian Bar Association resolution which called for consultation on appointments with provincial committees composed of the two provincial chief justices and benchers of the provincial law society.

Fulton says he consulted judges and lawyers informally "in a substantial number (but not a majority) of cases." It was "not necessary" and indeed "impractical" to adhere literally to his proposal of 1952, he said.

Compounded Silliness

(From The Toronto Globe and Mail)

VICTORIA Day used to be celebrated on May 24, but the St. Laurent government changed all that, making it fall on the Monday immediately preceding May 25. So last year May 24 came on May 19, and this year May 24 will come on May 18.

That, we should think, is silly enough. But the Canadian Chamber of Commerce would compound the silliness with yet another change. It has asked Ottawa to make Victoria Day fall on the Monday immediately following May 23. Such a change, if made this year, would see May 24 coming not on May 18 as scheduled, but on May 25.

Reports from Ottawa do not say why the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has requested this change, but we suppose it has something to do with the weather, which is generally a little bit warmer at the end of May than it is in the middle of May.

Given this argument, the stage is set for yet another (and let us hope, final) change — a proclamation by the Canadian government that May 24 is the second Monday in June.

The Packsack

Of GREGORY CLARK

AFTER leaving the ladies downstairs for a social evening with the TV, I went upstairs to my friend's den and found him busy sorting through a great pile of Christmas cards he was about to tie up in a bundle and put away somewhere until next December, when he would get them out to remind him of whom to send next Christmas's cards to.

He appeared to be searching for something in particular. "Ah, here it is!" he cried, picking out one card.

He had an envelope ready, and carefully he inserted this card with another one already in the envelope, and set them aside. Then he tied up the bundle.

"What's so special about those two?" I asked.

"Well," he said, "a couple of our friends have had a quarrel and they're not speaking to one another. It's been going on since last summer. They've made it rather embarrassing for all of us who know them both. So, if they haven't patched it up by next Christmas, I am going to send them these cards that they sent us. I'll keep them nice and fresh . . ."

"You mean?"

"Sure," he said, slyly, "They'll get cards from each other, and each will think the other has relented. And all will be forgiven."

Sneaky, but good.

Washington Angle

Language of Lynch Law

By DAVID LAWRENCE

TWO wrongs do not make a single right. This moral principle seems to have been abandoned not only in Cuba but by some people inside the United States who condone that savagery which has prompted the execution of dozens of persons without trial.

For, on the radio and in some press comments, the statement has been made that the executed Cubans deserved their fate because they committed crimes under dictator Batista. This is the language of "lynch law" which has too often been used by the mob in an attempt ot justify excesses.

Shall the United States government and the governments of Latin America, however, stand by and utter no word of protest about what has been happening in Cuba? Fidel Castro, the Cuban revolutionary chief, may say it's an "internal afair." Only a few days ago in Washington Soviet deputy premier Mikoyan reproached the American government and the United Nations for "meddling in the internal affairs of Hungary."

Cuba wouldn't be free and independent today if the United States had considered what was happening in Cuba an "internal affair," instead of sending troops to that island in 1898 to help liberate its people from Spanish savagery and tyranny.

* * *

Can any government which does not give a fair trial to a person accused of crime be regarded as civilized? Can any such government be expected to respect the lives and property of foreign residents?

Fidel Castro is a graduate of a Cuban law school and should know that summary execution of persons on the basis of revenge and without a chance for the accused to have a fair trial is a blot on the record of any government. He should know, too, that the United States, which stands throughout the world for principles of decency and respect for human life, cannot remain silent.

Yet about all Castro could think of was that the United States might intervene militarily. So he promptly threatened to massacre Americans.

In such curcumstances the policy of the United States government must be one of caution. Already diplomatic recognition has been extended, though it was perhaps done too hastily. No new American ambassador, however, has as yet been sent to Havana, and there is still an opportunuity for a more deliberate approach to the problem of appraising the government that has arisen in Cuba.

* * *

The Department of State could send a special envoy to explore the situation while the Senate takes its time about confirming the new ambassador, Philip Bonsal, now on duty at the head of our embassy in Bolivia. Experienced though Mr. Bonsal is, there would be an advantage in delaying his arrvial in Havana until a thorough examination has been made by a special envoy of just what the situation is now and is likely to be in the future.

Citizens of the United States have big investments in Cuba, and it is important, of course, to know how these are going to be treated. But far more important is what the attitude of the government is to be toward human life. The cry that there must be revenge and reprisals does not in the long run befit any 20th century government, least of all when it is only 90 miles away from this country and has been known throughout the world as the foster child of the United States since the day independence was achieved for Cuba through the blood sacrifices of American soldiers and sailors.

* * *

Hot tempers may explain away what has happened in the last few weeks in Cuba, but they do not excuse what has happened. The purpose may have been to intimidate the people of Cuba so that they will not venture to vote freely in any future election—if, indeed, such an election is going to be held.

The United States can always extend "de facto" recognition where a military commander is in control and there are no unsettled disputes between our government and the country where a revolution has occurred. Control is a factual matter. But "de jure" recognition — which means recognition of a lawfully constituted government — should await the expression by the people there in a free election. It will not serve the cause of American idealism to ignore the issue in Cuba while we call for free elections in East Germany and the captive states bordering on the Soviet empire.

The senate foreign relations committee, a majority of whom are Democrats, have an opportunity to present a united front along with the State Department in inquiring into how the situation in Cuba is developing before the new American ambassador is sent to Havana.